

A ruling Tuesday by a federal district court judge in Washington, D.C. places gray wolves in Wyoming under federal protection. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department notifies residents and hunters that this suspends the take of gray wolves in Wyoming. The judge's decision also impacts year-round hunting in the predator area and landowners protecting livestock and pets.

The State of Wyoming anticipates filing a motion to stay this decision this week.

"There are many positives in Judge Jackson's decision. However, she held that Wyoming's plan was not sufficiently formalized to support the Fish and Wildlife Service's 2012 rule allowing limited take of gray wolves. We believe an emergency rule can remedy this, and I have instructed the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and the Attorney General to proceed accordingly," Governor Matt Mead said.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department has suspended all sales of gray wolf licenses and will establish a system to refund hunters who have already purchased a 2014 gray wolf license. Hunting in the trophy game area in northwest Wyoming scheduled to begin in October is suspended pending the outcome of the motion for stay.

"The Game and Fish Department believes in our sound management of wolves over the last two years. Today, we want all wolf hunters and landowners to know that the take of wolves in Wyoming – hunting and lethal take provisions in Wyoming statute – are suspended because of the federal court ruling," said Scott Talbott, WGFD director.

If changes to the status of gray wolf hunting and other lethal take arise, they will be immediately announced by the State of Wyoming.